

I

Urban District of Burnham-on-Sea



# ANNUAL REPORT


OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31st DECEMBER, 1972.





Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2017 with funding from  
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b28965218>

BURNHAM-ON-SEA URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL  
HEALTH AND HOUSING COMMITTEE AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1972

Chairman:

MRS. E. E. J. HERRING

Vice Chairman:

MR. W. LIVERSIDGE

MRS. M. K. BUNCOMBE	MRS. H. B. HUGHES
MR. J. G. BYRNE	MR. J. S. HUNT
MR. H. CAISLEY GROEN	MRS. C. F. OGDEN
MR. I. G. CORNISH	MR. R. A. STEVENS
MR. K. J. DAVIES	MR. W. V. THOMAS
MRS. B. D. M. GRIFFIN	(Chairman of the Council)
	MR. M. S. TURCO

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF 1972

Medical Officer of Health:

R. H. WATSON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H., M.F.C.M.

Medical Officer in Department (Somerset C.C.)

A. M. ATKINSON, M.B., Ch.B., D.Obst., R.C.O.G.

Public Health Inspector/Housing Officer:

H. F. ROBINSON, M.A.P.H.I.

Assistant Housing Officer:

C. A. BUNNETT



ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1972

Tel: Bridgwater 55671

Health Department,  
Health Clinic,  
Mount Street,  
BRIDGWATER,  
TA6 3ER

November, 1973

To: The Chairman and Members of the  
Burnham-On-Sea Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you the Annual Report on the Health of the Urban District and the work of the Public Health Department during the year 1972. The report is drawn up in accordance with Department of Health and Social Security instructions and is set out in the manner of previous reports, so that comparison with former years can easily be made.

The health of the Urban District during the year under review has been good and there was no undue incidence of infectious diseases. The vital statistics compare favourably with those of the country as a whole.

As this is the last Annual Report which I will be making to the Council, bearing in mind the changes which will take place next April, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the Members of the Council and the other Chief Officers for all the help and co-operation which I have received during the years that I have had the honour to serve the Council as Medical Officer of Health.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

R. H. WATSON

## SUMMARY OF STATISTICS

### General Statistics

Area (including foreshore)	2,246 acres
Population (Census 1971)	12,281
Population (Registrar General's estimate) 1972	12,740
No. of inhabited houses on 31st December, 1972	4,565
Rateable value on 31st December, 1972	£507,810
Sum represented by 1p rate on 31st December, 1972	£4,890

### Extracts from VITAL STATISTICS for the year 1972

<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	66	81	147
Illegitimate	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>
	<u>70</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>155</u>

Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population	12.17
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births	5.16
Still births	5
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 live and still births	31.25
Total live and still births	160
Infant Deaths (deaths of infants under one year of age)	1
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - total	6.45
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - legitimate	Nil
Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 live births - illegitimate	125.00
Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births)	Nil
Early Nec-natal Mortality (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births)	Nil
Perinatal Mortality Rate (still births and deaths under 1 week combined per 1,000 total live and still births)	31.25
Maternal Mortality (including abortion)	Nil
Maternal Mortality Rate per 1,000 live and still births	Nil

### Deaths

Total number of deaths	222
Death rate per 1,000 population	17.43



## Births

After allowing for inward and outward transfers the Registrar General's figures show that there were 155 births (70 boys and 85 girls) in the Urban District during 1972, being 10 more than in 1971. Of these 8 were illegitimate. This is 5.16% of the total live births, as compared with 5.52% in 1971.

The birth rate of any area is dependent upon the composition of the population in that area. Obviously a population with a high proportion of persons of child bearing age will have more births per 1,000 of the population than an area with an unduly large number of people in the older age groups. To enable the birth rates of different areas to be compared, the Registrar General provides a "Comparability Factor" for each Local Authority area, which renders the birth rate for each area comparable with that of a district the population of which is of standard age and sex distribution. The birth rate for the Urban District adjusted in this manner is increased from 12.17 to 15.33 per 1,000 of the population.

The birth rate for England and Wales was 14.80.

Birth rate for the Urban District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972
Crude Birth Rate	13.32	12.49	11.88	11.62	12.17
Standardised Birth Rate	16.92	15.86	15.09	14.76	15.33
England and Wales	16.90	16.30	16.00	16.00	14.80

## Deaths

The number of deaths registered in the Urban District during 1972 was 174. Of these 26 were deaths of non-residents and were transferred to the district in which the persons ordinarily resided. There were, on the other hand, 74 deaths of Urban District residents registered outside the District. The total corrected number of deaths assigned to the District was 222 (88 males and 134 females). This was 7 more than in the previous year, and gave a crude death rate of 17.43.

This crude death rate cannot be used to compare the mortality with that of other districts, as the populations of all areas are not similarly constituted as regards age and sex distribution. The Registrar General supplies an "Area Comparability Factor" and the crude death rate multiplied by this figure can then be compared with the death rate of the country as a whole, or with the mortality of any other local area. The corrected death rate so obtained was 10.11 per 1,000 of the population and this was compared with 12.10 for England and Wales.

Death rates for the Urban District and for England and Wales for the past five years were as follows:-

	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972
Crude Death Rate	18.23	18.22	19.40	17.23	17.43
Standardised Death Rate	11.85	11.84	12.22	10.85	10.11
England and Wales	11.90	11.90	11.70	11.60	12.10

Of 222 deaths, 184 occurred in people over the age of 65 years. 36 occurred in people in the productive age groups 15 to 64. Details of the latter are given in the following table:-

	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Total
Enteritis and other diarrhoeal diseases	-	-	-	1	-	1
Malignant neoplasm, buccal cavity etc.,	-	-	-	1	1	2
Malignant neoplasm, intestine	-	-	-	-	2	2
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	-	-	-	-	2	2
Malignant neoplasm, breast	-	-	-	-	2	2
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	-	-	-	-	2	2
Other malignant neoplasms	-	1	-	1	2	4
Benign and unspecified neoplasms	-	-	-	-	1	1
Ischaemic heart disease	-	-	2	2	5	9
Other forms of heart disease	-	-	-	-	1	1
Cerebrovascular disease	-	-	-	2	-	2
Pneumonia	-	-	-	-	1	1
Bronchitis and emphysema	-	-	-	-	2	2
Nephritis and nephrosis	-	-	-	2	-	2
Congenital anomalies	-	-	-	1	-	1
Motor vehicle accidents	-	1	-	-	-	1
Other diseases, genito-urinary system	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total	-	2	2	10	22	36



The following table shows the causes of all deaths and sex distribution:-

Cause of Death	M	F	TOTAL
All Causes	88	134	222
Enteritis and other diarrhoeal diseases	-	1	1
Malignant neoplasm, buccal cavity etc.,	1	1	2
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	1	2	3
Malignant neoplasm, intestine	5	3	8
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	3	-	3
Malignant neoplasm, breast	-	4	4
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	-	2	2
Malignant neoplasm, prostate	4	-	4
Leukaemia	1	2	3
Other malignant neoplasms	5	9	14
Benign and unspecified neoplasms	1	-	1
Diabetes mellitus	2	-	2
Chronic rheumatic heart disease	-	2	2
Hypertensive disease	-	4	4
Ischaemic heart disease	24	25	49
Other forms of heart disease	5	5	10
Cerebrovascular disease	10	46	56
Influenza	2	1	3
Pneumonia	6	4	10
Bronchitis and emphysema	7	1	8
Intestinal obstruction and hernia	-	1	1
Nephritis and nephrosis	1	1	2
Congenital anomalies	1	-	1
Symptoms and ill defined conditions	-	1	1
Other diseases of circulatory system	4	10	14
Other diseases of respiratory system	1	-	1
Other diseases of digestive system	1	4	5
Other diseases of genito-urinary system	1	1	2
Diseases of musculo-skeletal system	1	2	3
Motor vehicle accidents	1	1	2
All other accidents	-	1	1

### Cancer Mortality

The number of deaths of Urban District residents from cancer was 43 (males 20 and females 23). This was 6 less than the previous year. Cancer deaths constituted 19.37% of the total deaths during the year.

The following table shows the localisation of the disease in the 43 cases:-

Localisation	Number of Deaths			
	Male	Female	Total	1972
Buccal Cavity	1	1	2	1
Stomach	1	2	3	5
Intestine	5	3	8	6
Lung, Bronchus	3	-	3	11
Breast	-	4	4	8
Uterus	-	2	2	4
Prostate	4	-	4	2
Leukaemia	1	2	3	1
Other malignant neoplasms	5	9	14	11
Total	20	23	43	49

### Cancer of the Uterus

The County Council have now started a scheme whereby cervical smears can be taken with a view to preventing cancer of the womb. The tests are taken by family doctors and are examined at Musgrove Park Hospital.

### Cancer of the Lung

The ages at which deaths from lung cancer occurred during the last five years is detailed in the following table:-

Year	Under 15	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	Over 65	Total
1968	-	-	-	-	-	1	6	7
1969	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	7
1970	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	3
1971	-	-	-	-	1	5	5	11
1972	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	3

### Deaths from Heart Disease

Of 222 deaths heart disease caused 61 (males 29, females 32). It represented 27.48% of the total deaths from all causes and was equivalent to a death rate of 4.79 per 1,000 of the population.

### Infantile Mortality

1 infant under one year of age died during the year. This gives an infantile mortality rate of 6.45 per 1,000 of all live births, while the corresponding rate for England and Wales was 17.00.

### Population

The Registrar General's estimate of the population of the Urban District was 12,740 which was an increase of 459 on the Census population for the previous year.

Year	Population	Estimated Increase
1961	9,890	-130
1962	10,240	350
1963	10,400	160
1964	10,480	80
1965	10,780	300
1966	10,980	200
1967	11,180	200
1968	11,410	230
1969	11,530	120
1970	11,700	170
1971		
(Census)	12,281	581
1972	12,740	459

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS  
AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

The following table sets out the cases of notifiable diseases that occurred in the Urban District during 1972. The table is drawn up after making the necessary corrections in diagnosis by either the practitioners or the Medical Officers at the Isolation Hospital:-

Disease	Under 1 year	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	65 and over	Age unknown	Total
Measles	1	-	3	3	3	15	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26
Scarlet Fever	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Whooping Cough	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	4
Tuberculosis	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	4
Total	1	-	3	4	4	18	3	-	1	1	1	1	-	-	37

During the previous year 92 cases of infectious diseases were notified.

### Diphtheria

No cases of diphtheria were notified.

### Acute Poliomyelitis

No cases were notified.

### Measles

26 cases were notified.

### Tuberculosis

3 cases of respiratory tuberculosis and 1 non-respiratory case were notified during the year.

### B.C.G. Vaccine

In order to raise the immunity of school leavers to tuberculosis, vaccination with B.C.G. vaccine was offered to children between the ages of 13 and 14 years attending schools in the Mid-Somerset Area. 888 received the preliminary skin test, to determine whether they had in fact already experienced some infection with tuberculosis. Of these 808 were vaccinated with B.C.G. vaccine.

### Immunisation and Vaccination

Immunisation and vaccination against diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, poliomyelitis, smallpox and measles, are now entirely carried out by general practitioners under the County Council scheme utilising a computer to deal with the administrative aspects. This scheme is working satisfactorily and it will certainly result in raising still further the general level of immunisation of the community.

### German Measles (Rubella)

This disease is important because if an expectant mother is infected during the first three months of pregnancy the baby in many cases, is affected by severe congenital abnormalities. The County Council have introduced a scheme offering vaccination against Rubella to girls aged 11-13 inclusive.



## GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES

### Laboratory Facilities

Pathological specimens are sent to the laboratory at Musgrove Park Hospital, which forms part of the Public Health Service. Results of investigations are available with the minimum of delay and there is good liaison between the laboratory personnel and the field workers in the Public Health Department.

### Hospitals

Hospitals in the area are administered by the South Western Regional Hospital Board through the West Somerset Hospital Management Committee.

Cases of infectious diseases needing hospital treatment, or isolation, are admitted to Taunton Isolation Hospital.

The adaptation of Bridgwater Hospital to cater for short stay surgical cases was completed and the scheme commenced. Patients requiring relatively minor operative procedures are treated and then discharged to the care of their family doctors and practice nurses after 48 hours. This scheme has functioned remarkably smoothly, and has significantly reduced the waiting list in the Mid-Somerset Clinical Area.

The proposed District General Hospital at Lyngford has now got a definite place in the Hospital Board's building programme and active planning has already begun.

### Welfare of Old People

The Council are now assisting the W.V.S. to provide meals on wheels for old people, and this worthwhile service is much appreciated by the recipients. An average of 71 meals per week are distributed.

### National Assistance Act, 1947 - Section 17

A number of cases were assisted through informal action, and in no case was it necessary for the Council to take statutory action to secure the admission of an old person to suitable accommodation.

## SANITARY CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

### Housing

The number of permanent dwellings in the Urban District	4,915
The number of permanent dwellings owned by the Local Authority	802
Number of houses declared unfit under Section 9 of the Housing Act, 1957	-



Number of houses closed as a result of an  
undertaking given by the owner or  
following the issue of Closing Orders -

Number of houses made fit during the year 21

	Houses/flats erected during the year		Houses in course of erection	
	For slum clearance	For other purposes	For slum clearance	For other purposes
Local Authority	-	76	-	42
Private Enterprise	-	141	-	162
Total	-	217	-	204

At the end of the year there were 299 applicants for Council houses.

### Water Supplies

The mains water supply was satisfactory both as to quality and quantity. The water is treated by chlorination and bacteriological tests were carried out on the treated water on 12 occasions, all of which gave excellent results.

Routine chemical analysis of water supply showed the following result.

Physical Characters	Clear and bright Hazen Units less than 5
Sediment	Nil
Reaction pH	Very slightly Alkaline 7.3
	<u>Parts per million</u>
Total Solids	355.0
Total Alkalinity (as CaCO <sub>3</sub> )	250.0
Carbonate Hardness " "	250.0
Non-carbonate " " "	60.0
Total Hardness " "	310.0
Chloride (as Cl)	18.0
Ammoniacal Nitrogen (as N)	0.002
Albuminoid " "	0.012
Nitrate " "	5.0
Nitrite " "	Nil
Oxygen absorbed from Permanganate in 4 hours at 27°C	0.10
Free Carbon Dioxide	12.0
Iron	Nil
Copper	0.2
Zinc	Less than 0.3
Lead	0.016
This is a hard water of satisfactory chemical purity.	

### Sewage Disposal

Work on the Council's scheme for comprehensive re sewer ing of the District and for the concentration of all sewage prior to treatment and discharge to the river Parrett is progressing satisfactorily. All sewage will be conveyed to a new treatment works to be sited at West Huntspill. This works will also serve the villages to be included in Bridgwater Rural District Council's Northern Trunk Sewer, and also certain villages in Axbridge Rural District. The cost of work in progress in the Urban District is £1,020,000.

### Refuse Disposal

Domestic refuse is removed by the Council on a weekly collection. The Council have agreed with Bridgwater Rural District Council for the joint use of the latter Council's tip at Cossington. In order to make the best use of available tipping sites and to dispose of refuse in the least objectionable way, having regard to cost, the Council are actively considering the provision of a pulverisation plant for domestic refuse.

### Camping Sites

Six sites are licensed. All have been inspected during the season and generally speaking sanitary conditions remain satisfactory. Improvements have been carried out to cater more adequately for the needs of increasing numbers of caravaners.

### Ice Cream

The number of premises registered for manufacture and sale is 2 and for retail only is 62.

### Slaughterhouses

Ample facilities for slaughtering are available at the abattoir at Weston-Super-Mare, and consequently there are no licensed slaughterhouses in the Urban District.

### Premises where Food is prepared

No statutory action was taken regarding enforcement of the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act, and co-operation from food traders has continued to be good and improvements have been made to premises and equipment.

### Knacker Yard

The one knacker's yard in the Urban District is regularly inspected and a satisfactory standard is maintained. The Meat (Sterilization) Regulations 1969 require all knacker meat (other than the meat of a hare or rabbit) to be sterilised before entering the chain of distribution. A sterilisation plant to meet the requirements of the regulation has been installed at the local yard. The operation of the Regulations is also checked by routine visits to pet food shops.

### Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act 1963

This act was introduced to secure satisfactory working conditions and the provision of adequate facilities for employees. Altogether 160 premises' are registered and numerous visits have been made to secure compliance with the requirements of the Act.

### Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1960

Routine inspections of premises under the above named Regulations have continued. Shopkeepers have been interested in the production and sale of food under hygienic conditions and improvements have been achieved by direct discussion rather than by statutory action such as the service of notices under the Regulations.

The number of food premises in the Urban District which are subject to these regulations is 125 and these have been classified in the following categories, each business being classified by its main trade.

Food Hygiene (General) Regulations, 1960

Schedule of Premises

Trade Category	Total	Number fitted to comply with Reg.16. (Provision of Wash Basins)	Number to which Reg.19 applies (Provision of Sinks)	Number fitted to comply with Reg.19.
Butchers' and fresh meat shops	13	13	13	13
Bakers and Confectioners	8	8	8	8
Fried Fish Shops	5	5	5	5
Groceries and Provisions	42	42	4	4
Cafes, Restaurants, Canteens & Beach Stalls	24	24	22	22
Hotels and Public Houses	21	21	16	16
Other Licensed Premises (Sports and Social Clubs and Holiday Camps)	12	12	12	12
Totals	125	125	60	60

# FACTORIES ACT 1961

The following particulars indicate the action taken under Part 1 of the Factories Act, 1961:-

	Number on Register	Inspections	Number of Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authority.	11	12	-	-
(11) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority.	55	10	-	-
(111) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises)	10	15	-	-
Total	76	37	-	-

Particulars	No. of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Insp.	By H.M. Insp.	
Want of cleanliness	-	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding (S.2)	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary conveniences (S.7)	-	-	-	-	-
(a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	3	3	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
(continued)					

Particulars	No. of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.M. Insp.	By H.M. Insp.	
Other offences against the Act (including offences relating to Outwork).	-	-	-	-	-
Total	3	3	-	-	-

PART VIII

(Sections 133 and 134)

	Section 133			Section 134		
Nature of Work	No. of out-workers in August. List required by Section 133 (1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises	Notices Served	Prosecutions
Stuffed Toys	5	-	-	-	-	-





